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LETTER DATED 5 DECEMBER 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 5 December 1999 from Mr. Tariq Aziz, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq, outlining Iraq's position with regard to Security Council resolutions 1275 and 1280 (1999) and warning against attempts to use the oil-for-food programme as a means of bringing pressure to bear and using blackmail in order to ensure the adoption of the British draft resolution.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Saeed HASAN
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex

Letter dated 5 December 1999 from the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General

I feel that I must explain to you Iraq's position concerning the decision, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1280 (1999), to extend the oil-for-food and medicines programme for a one-week period ending on 11 December 1999, and with regard to the earlier resolution which extended the programme for a period of two weeks.

Iraq has refused to comply with the provisions of this and the earlier resolution (1275 (1999)), because an extension of this nature is both impractical and farcical. As experience of implementing the last six phases of the oil-for-food programme has shown, such an extension cannot be implemented.

I should like to confirm that there is no link between our decision not to comply with the provisions of Security Council resolution 1280 (1999) and our rejection of the British draft resolution which is being discussed in the Security Council.

Iraq categorically rejects the British draft resolution as constituting a malicious and biased rewriting of existing Security Council resolutions. Iraq has honoured its fundamental obligations under those resolutions and it is incumbent upon the Council to follow suit and adopt forthwith a resolution that provides for the complete and unconditional lifting of the sanctions. Iraq cannot accept the new and arbitrary conditions which the British draft resolution seeks to impose upon it, since they constitute a threat to its sovereignty and national interests. The Iraqi people have nothing to gain from this draft resolution, the real purpose of which is, in the sick imagination of its sponsors, to ensure the subjugation of Iraq, to delay the lifting of the sanctions, to mislead international public opinion and perhaps to achieve other goals. There is clearly an attempt to use the oil-for-food programme as a means of bringing pressure to bear and using blackmail for the purpose of ensuring the adoption of the British draft resolution.

Iraq is willing to cooperate in the extension of the oil-for-food programme for a six-month period, and hopes to see the introduction during that period of the improvements that we have requested, that you have proposed on previous occasions and that a number of States members of the Security Council have also suggested.

We have hereby clarified all matters. If someone wishes to muddy the waters, they, and not Iraq, must take responsibility for their position. Those who wish to adopt one-sided resolutions, when a resolution should, by its nature, take account of the views and desires of another party or parties, should bear responsibility for the adoption of isolated resolutions that disregard earlier resolutions and that create a precedent whereby previous obligations can be disavowed on the basis of opportunism and power politics.

(Signed) Tariq AZIZ
Deputy Prime Minister